

## **APPENDIX B: RESUSCITATION PROCEDURES**

If you catch a sea turtle that is active, it should be returned to the water over the aft portion of the vessel, preferably in a non-fishing area, when gear is not in use.

If a turtle appears to be comatose (unconscious), then you should attempt to revive it before putting it back into the water. Use the following method of resuscitation:

**Place the turtle on its plastron (lower shell) and elevate the hindquarters several inches to permit the lungs to drain off water.**

A comatose but live sea turtle may, in some cases, exhibit absolutely no movement or signs of life (no muscle reflexes). In other cases, an unconscious turtle may show some evidence of eyelid or tail movement when touched. Sea turtles may take some time to revive. Do not give up too quickly. Regulations allow a fisherman without a permit to keep a turtle on deck up to 24 hours. Even turtles successfully resuscitated benefit from being held on deck as long as possible, to allow toxins which built up as a result of stress to dissipate from the body. Try to keep the skin, and especially the eyes moist while the turtle is on deck. A turtle that has shown no sign of life after 24 hours on deck (held in the shade where further damage to it won't occur) may safely be considered dead.

If the turtle cannot be revived before returning to port and it cannot be salvaged, it should be returned to the water, preferably in a non-fishing area. Mark the turtle (spray paint it or tag it) before returning it to the water.